

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00496 020757Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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R 020652" MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9222
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL UDORN
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0496

BANGKOK ALSO PLEASE PASS UDORN ELECTRICALLY

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS PDEV SHUM LA
SUBJECT: REPORT OF OFFICIALS COMMITTING CRIMES IN PAKSANE

REF: VIENTIANE 0489

1. A LAO STUDENT WHO CLAIMS HE IS THE NEPHEW OF DEUAN
SOUNNALATH (FORMERLY DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND
NOW DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, REFTEL) HAS
REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
NEAR PAKSANE LIVED IN FEAR OF THE GOVERNMENT AND
BELIEVED THAT THEY HAD NO PROTECTION AGAINST THIEVERY
AND MURDER BY UNCONTROLLED ARMY AND GOVERNMENT OFFI-
CIALS.

2. THE SOURCE SAID THAT HE RECENTLY SAW LAO PEOPLE'S
LIBERATION ARMY TROOPS STEAL BUFFALOS FROM UNDERNEATH
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VILLAGERS' HOMES WHEN HE WAS VISITING HIS WIFE'S
VILLAGE NEAR PAKSANE. WHEN THE VILLAGERS POKED THEIR
HEADS OUT OF THE WINDOW TO SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING, THE
SOLDIERS REPORTEDLY FIRED AT THEM. THE SOLDIERS THEN
SMUGGLED THE BUFFALOS ACROSS THE RIVER TO THAILAND.

3. THE SOURCE SAID THAT VILLAGERS NEAR PAKSANE WERE FURTHER DISILLUSIONED WITH THE NEW REGIME WHEN LOCAL OFFICIALS BLATENTLY MISAPPROPRIATED GOVERNMENT RICE STOCKS FOR THEIR OWN PROFIT. HE SAID THAT VILLAGERS WHO COMPLAINED ABOUT CORRUPTION LATER DISAPPEARED AND WERE BELIEVED TO BE SHOT. IN THE CASES WHERE WHOLE VILLAGES PROTESTED LOCAL CORRUPTION AS A GROUP, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY CALLED IN VIETNAMESE TROOPS TO QUELL THE "UNREST AND ANTI-REVOLUTIONARY BEHAVIOR."

4. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY OFTEN COLLECTS AND DISCOUNTS ANTI-REGIME STORIES FROM DISGRUNTLED LAO CITIZENS, THE FACT THAT THIS SOURCE CLAIMS TO BE A WITNESS TO THE CATTLE RUSTLING, IS A COMMITTED COMMUNIST, A HIGH RANKING LEADER OF THE YOUTH ASSOCIATION, AND A RELATIVE OF THE POWERFUL DEUAN SOUNNALATH ADDS AN ELEMENT OF CREDIBILITY TO THE REPORT. IN ADDITION, PAKSANE IS A PARTICULARLY UNSTABLE REGION WHERE RESISTANCE ELEMENTS ARE ACTIVE AND WHERE THE LAO MEDIA HAS REPORTED INCIDENTS OF BUFFALO RUSTLING.

5. THE REPORT, IF TRUE, UNDERSCORES THE LACK OF CONTROL PRIME MINISTER KAYSONE PHOMVIHANE'S GOVERNMENT HAS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.
ROBERTS

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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